

## **FOREWORD BY SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION RODNEY E. SLATER**

Under President Clinton and Vice President Gore's stewardship, we have made great progress in preserving our natural heritage. Our air is cleaner, and our water purer. Magnificent old-growth forests are being spared, and endangered species protected. Critical resources are being conserved, and scenic vistas preserved. Much has been achieved, and yet much more needs to be done.

Perhaps the greatest environmental challenge we face is global climate change. The world's most respected scientists agree that the threat is real and that the potential impacts are significant: extreme weather, ranging from heat waves and droughts to severe storms and floods; rising sea levels which could inundate our coastal cities; and damage to agriculture and to entire ecosystems.

The long time required for change demands that we take immediate action, and President Clinton and Vice President Gore have stepped to the plate. In December 1997, they led the way to an historic agreement in Kyoto, Japan, demonstrating their support for market incentives and new technologies that will reduce the greenhouse gas emissions which contribute to climate change. Congress must ratify the Kyoto Protocol before United States implementation of this important agreement may begin.

The President also proposed tax cuts and research to encourage energy-efficient technologies and clean sources of energy here in the United States. In transportation, we are already developing clean, fuel-efficient cars and trucks and promoting transit ridership.

We want to build on these early steps with balanced, reasonable transportation strategies which will protect our environment while continuing to promote mobility and the economic growth it supports.

This report provides an overview of the issues surrounding climate change and summarizes transportation solutions currently being debated around the world. I hope that it will inspire serious discussion and analysis, so that we can find the measures which best meet our needs.

Over the past generation, we have persevered to find ways to protect our environment and to enhance our economy at the same time. As we face the challenges of global climate change, I am confident that working together we will continue to do all that is required to safeguard our earth.

Sincerely,

Rodney E. Slater

